

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 226041

EXDIS, TOSEC 166, ZFF JERUSALEM ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT ISLAMABAD 9732 ACTION DEPT INFO KABUL TEHRAN
NEW DELHI MOSCOW OCT 10TH

QUOTE

S E C R E T SLAMABAD 9732

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT PRIME MIMISTER BHUTTO

1. SOMETIME AGO WHEN PRIME MINISTER AND BEGUM BHUTTO
WERE AT OUR RESIDENCE FOR A MOVIE, HE ASKED ME WHAT I
THOUGHT OF THE IDEA OF HIS TRYING TO MAKE A QUICK "WORKING
TRIP" VISIT TO WASHINGTON AFTER HIS COMING VISIT TO MOSCOW.
HE SAID HE HAD KNOWN PRESIDENT NIXON QUITE WELL, AND HAD
AN UNCOMFORTABLE FEELING ABOUT HAVING NO PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE
WITH PRESIDENT FORD. HE ALSO SAID A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF JUST WHERE PAKISTAN STOOD UNDER A NEW PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES WAS OF SUPREME IMPORTANCE TO HIM.

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I KNOW HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHES TO PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIPS, AND REPLIED THAT WHILE I HAD NO QUESTION
ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCH A GET-ACQUAINTED VISIT, I HAD
RESERVATIONS AS TO WHAT WOULD BE POSSIBLE ON THE CALENDAR

OF OUR NEW PRESIDENT.

2. THE TIME FOR THIS DISCUSSION WAS LIMITED, AND I WAS NOT LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS WAS A FEELER WHICH SHOULD BE REPORTED TO WASHINGTON, AT LEAST NOT WITHOUT FURTHER CONVERSATION BETWEEN US. (DUE TO HIS INTERNAL TRAVELS I HAVE NOT SEEN HIM SINCE.) I ALSO HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD MAKE UP HIS OWN MIND AS TO THE DESIRABILITY OF SUCH A TRIP AFTER THE VISIT OF THE SECRETARY HERE, AND PERHAPS AFTER DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY ON THE SUBJECT.

3. IN A LONG TALK WITH AGHA SHAHI THIS MORNING, HE REFERRED TO THE ABOVE EXCHANGE BETWEEN BHUTTO AND ME AND ASKED IF I THOUGHT THAT SUCH A TRIP WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN NOVEMBER. I TOLD HIM I HAD NOT PUT SUCH A SPECIFIC PROPOSITION TO WASHINGTON AS I HAD NOT THOUGHT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS THAT DEFINITE. SHAHI SEEMED SURPRISED AND I WOULD THEREFORE CONCLUDE THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME MISUNDERSTANDING, AT LEAST ON THE PART OF ONE OF THE THREE OF US.

4. SHAHI MADE A VERY STRONG PLEA THAT WE RECEIVE BHUTTO AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE THIS FALL. HE SAID THAT PAKISTAN WAS FEELING IN AN INCREASINGLY EXPOSED POSITION AND FELT A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THIS ON OUR HIGHEST LEVEL WAS ALMOST AN IMPERATIVE. HE FIRST TALKED ABOUT THE PROPOSED SOVIET ASIAN SECURITY SYSTEM. HE SAID THAT THE SEPTEMBER 25 SPEECH OF GROMYKO IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS NOT ONLY A LONG-TERM SOVIET GOAL, BUT ONE WITH SOME URGENCY IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HE SAID THAT BHUTTO WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE UNDER PRESSURE IN MOSCOW ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT THAT HE WOULD OBVIOUSLY ADOPT A STALLING POSITION. IN THIS REGARD THE SOVIET POSITION BOTH IN INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN WAS OF CONSIDERABLE CONCERN. AS REGARDS THE LATTER, IT COULD AT ANY TIME BECOME EVEN MORE SO AS IT WAS NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION THAT A PRO-SOVIET COUP COULD HAPPEN IN AFGHANISTAN. AS FAR AS THE UNDER-BELLY OF RUSSIA WAS CONCERNED
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THIS WOULD LEAVE ONLY IRAN AND PAKISTAN OUTSIDE SOVIET ORBIT. THE FORMER WAS GREATLY INCREASING ITS STRENGTH, PRIMARILY THROUGH MILITARY SUPPLY FROM THE U.S., AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. AS REGARDS SECURITY MATTERS COULD HARDLY BE IN DOUBT, EVEN IF WE SOMETIMES DIFFERED WITH THE SHAH ON OTHER ITEMS. THE SAME, OF COURSE, COULD NOT BE SAID OF PAKISTAN WHERE U.S. SECURITY ITEMS WERE STILL UNDER EMBARGO, AND WHERE THERE WAS GREATER DOUBT AS TO WHAT OUR SECURITY AGREEMENTS REALLY MEANT TO US.

5. SHAHI SAID THAT PAKISTAN OF COURSE HAD LIMITATIONS AS TO ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE U.S. SCHEME OF THINGS, BUT THOUGHT THAT IT SHOULD BE LOOKED UPON AS CONSIDERABLY SIGNIFICANT

FROM A STRATEGIC POINT OF VIEW. HE SAID THAT U.S. INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF HAD OBVIOUSLY INCREASED. THE PAKS HOPED THEY COULD BE OF HELP TO US IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD. PAKISTAN ALSO WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE APPROACH OF BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND MAINLAND CHINA TO THE SUBCONTINENT. CHINA ITSELF HAS BEEN A PROVEN FIREND OF PAKISTAN, BUT ITS SUPPORT HAD ITS LIMITATIONS. THE PAKS AS WELL AS THE SOVIET UNION WERE WAITING TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS SINCE CHINA IS OBVIOUSLY ENTERING A STAGE OF FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP.

6. SHAHI SAID THAT THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE EARLY WORD FROM PRESIDENT FORD THAT THE MAJOR THRUST OF U.S. POLICY WOULD CONTINUE, BUT THEY FELT THAT INEVITABLY THERE WOULD BE DIFFERENCES AND NUANCES IN THE PAK-U.S. RELATIONSHIP AS YET UNKNOWN. HE SAID THEY FELT STRONGLY, GIVEN A CHANCE, THAT THEY COULD CONVINCE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION THAT THE TIME HAD COME WHEN IT WAS IN THE U.S. INTERESTS TO BACK UP DECLARATIONS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT TO PAKISTAN WITH MATERIAL AID IN THE SECURITY FIELD.

7. SHAHI SAID THERE WAS INTERNAL EROSION IN PUBLIC OPINION IN PAKISTAN REGARDING PAK-U.S. RELATIONS BECAUSE OF THIS QUESTION; THIS EROSION WOULD AFFECT BOTH THE U.S. POSITION HERE AND THE POSITION OF THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. HIS GOVERNMENT OBVIOUSLY LIKED TO MAKE STATEMENTS CALLING ATTENTION TO U.S. SUPPORT, BUT THESE WERE GETTING LESS AND LESS CREDIBLE. THIS CREDIBILITY PROBLEM WAS TAKING PLACE AGAINST A BACKDROP OF INCREASED ACTIVITIES OF SOVIET
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OFFICIALS WITH PAKISTAN. BOTH GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT PESONNEL WERE BEING INVITED MORE AND MORE TO SUCH THINGS AS PEACE COUNCIL MEETINGS, ETC. IN THESE GATHERINGS THERE WAS DERISIVE CONVERSATION AS TO JUST WHAT THE "CORNERSTONE" PHRASE REALLY MEANT, AND WHAT WERE THE MANIFESTATIONS OF U.S. SUPPORT. HE SAID INCREASINGLY THE LEFTIST ELEMENTS HERE WERE ASKING THE QUESTION AS TO HOW UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS PAKISTAN COULD AFFORD TO CONTINUE TO STAND UP TO THE SOVIET UNION AND NOT ACCEPT THE PROTECTION OF THE UMBRELLA OF THEIR PROPOSED SECURITY SYSTEM. HE SAID THERE WAS INCREASING DOUBT IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE ITSELF AS TO THE WISDOM OF THEIR CURRENT POLICY AND THAT THERE WERE THOSE IN HIS OWN MINISTRY WHO FELT THAT, WITH THE FLUIDITY AROUND THEM, PAKISTAN MIGHT HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE IN THE END BUT TO GO INTO THE ASIAN SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE HOPES THAT THIS WOULD GIVE THEM PROTECTION FROM THEIR NEIGHBORS WHO WOULD BE UNDER SOVIET INFLUENCE. HE SAID ALL THIS WAS BEING TALKED ABOUT EVEN THOUGH THE PROPONENTS REALIZED THE EFFECT IT WOULD HAVE ON PAK-CYDNA RELATIONS.

8. SHAHI SAID THAT THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION WITH INDIA SHOULD OF COURSE GO FORWARD, BUT PAKISTAN COULD

HARDLY RELY FOR ITS SECURITY SOLELY UPON THAT PROCESS, AS IT IN ITSELF WAS NO REAL GUARANTEE IN THE FUTURE. HE SAID THEY WOULD NEVER ASK FOR ANY BALANCE IN STRENGTH WITH INDIA, BUT THAT IT WAS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT THAT SOME ACTION BE TAKEN TO LET PAKISTAN FEEL LESS EXPOSED THAN IT DOES AT PRESENT. AS A GOVERNMENT THEY WANTED TO RECOVER THEIR CREDIBILITY BEFORE THEIR OWN PEOPLE ON HIS QUESTION. HE SAID IF THINGS WENT ON AS THEY WERE NOW IT WAS NOT BEYOND THE REALM OF PROBABILITY THAT THERE COULD COME A SWING IN PUBLIC OPINION WHICH COULD INFLUENCE ELECTIONS AND PERHAPS CAUSE LEADERS TO TURN TO QUITE NEW FOREIGN POLICIES. THIS THEY THOUGHT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE AND QUITE CONTRARY TO THE BASIC INTERESTS OF THE U.S., THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, AND INDEED THE ENTIRE WESTERN WORLD. HE SAID THE SHAH, OF COURSE, FELT THE SAME WAY AND SPECULATED SOMEWHAT AS TO WHETHER EVEN WE AND THE SHAH WERE ANY LONGER IN COMPLETE HARMONY AS REGARDS STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN THE AREA. HE SAID THE PAKS WERE NOT CERTAIN THEY UNDERSTOOD WHAT WAS BEHIND SOME OF THE LATEST PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE SHAH.

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9. SHAHI SAID HE GAVE ME ALL OF THE ABOVE TO EMPHASIZE WHY THE PRIME MINISTER HAD CONCLUDED THAT A VISIT TO WASHINGTON WOULD BE IMPORTANT AND TIMELY. I TOLD HIM I WOULD REPORT HIS REMARKS IN DETAIL AND FELT CERTAIN THEY WOULD BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED. I SAID THAT OTHER THAN KNOWING PRESIDENT FORD'S SCHEDULE WAS EXTREMELY CROWDED, I COULD OFFER NO THOUGHT AS TO WHEN A VISIT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE. HE SAID IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO BE AT THE PRESIDENT'S CONVENIENCE. HE SAID A TWO-DAY VISIT WOULD SUFFICE AND NOT MORE THAN A COUPLE OF HOURS WOULD BE EXPECTED OF OUR PRESIDENT'S TIME. HE SAID IF THE VISIT COULD BE ARRANGED, BHUTTO WOULD PROBABLY ALSO TRY TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITS TO CANADA AND WEST GERMANY ON THE SAME TRIP.

10. COMMENT: I CANNOT, OF COURSE, PRESS FOR AN EARLY BHUTTO VISIT AS I HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE HERE OF SCHEDULES IN WASHINGTON. I CAN SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE FRUSTRATIONS AND FEELING OF INSECURITY AS RELAYED BY SAHI ARE STRONGLY HELD AND REFLECT THOSE OF BHUTO HIMSELF AND MANY OF HIS KEY ASSOCIATES. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF UNSETTLING EVENTS OF THE PAST SIX MONTHS TO ADD TO PRESENT FRUSTRATIONS AS HAVE BEEN REPORTED FROM HERE. IT IS, I THINK, NO WONDER THAT THEY WOULD RE-THINK THE ALTERNATIVES AND OPTIONS FACING THEM AS THE MOSCOW TRIP OF BHUTTO GROWS MORE NEAR. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE SHAH'S RECENT MOVES TOWARD INDIA AND ONE COMING TRIP OF THE SECRETARY, LONG LOOKED UPON HERE PRIMARILY AS AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE INDO-U.S. RELATIONS, HAVE ADDED CURRENT FRUSTRATIONS. IN THIS LATTER CONVICTION I WOULD GUESS, IN ADDITION TO THE SUBSTANCE THAT WOULD BE COVERED, BHUTTO WOULD SEE PUBLIC RELATION BENEFITS IN PAKISTAN IN A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD SHORTLY AFTER THE SECRETARY'S

TRIP TO INDIA.

11. I WOULD HOPE THE IDEA OF A BHUTTO VISIT WOULD BE GIVEN
SUCH CONSIDERATIONS AS IS POSSIBLE UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES.
IN THE MEANTIME, THIS MESSAGE WILL GIVE THE SECRETARY SOME
OF THE FLAVOR HE MAY EXPECT TO FIND HERE, ALTHOUGH I DOUBT
THAT IT WILL CONTAIN MANY SURPRISES FOR HIM.

BYROADE

UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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